

PEN PARK EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER

By David Morrow

It's April, a full nine months into my new position and only about a month away from officially moving my wife and all of my worldly belongings to Nevada. The last nine months have been filled with a mixture of feelings: a degree of sadness caused by leaving friends and family behind; some frustration experienced in trying to improve the division's financial position; a degree of anxiety created by a new budget process and countless new acronyms used to describe almost every aspect of state government. But in spite of everything I am delighted to be working with all of you and optimistic about our future.



We have made some progress over the last few months. A great deal of ground work has been laid in preparation for the upcoming legislative session. We have all become better acquainted with the budget process and at the same time explained our plight to anyone who would listen. We are in the process of developing a marketing strategy for the entire division and some helpful guidelines to assist individual parks and programs to market their efforts more effectively. Beginning in May, we will begin selling selected fee permits at the Division and Regional offices. Our hope is to do all that is possible to help increase visitation and revenue collections.

The P&D section is fully staffed and busily working on a wide assortment of projects. **Steve Weaver** has masterfully combined a number of funding sources to ensure that we can complete as many of the capital improvement projects as possible. **Jim Deloney's** retirement will be a loss, but we are anxious to provide another advancement opportunity to someone willing to step up and take over a very challenging section. **Steve, Allen** and I are all interested in updating the current park master plans, conducting a statewide survey of Nevada residents and park visitors and developing a greater understanding of the economic benefit of state parks.

It has not been an easy year for anyone, but especially those of you that had to operate with vacant positions. The accounting/personnel section was especially hard hit by vacancies. **Kirsten, Kim, Stacey** and **Anke** have all been impacted by resignations or health related absences. If the true measure of someone's value is their ability to work under pressure, everyone in the accounting/personnel section has measured up very well.

Kim Copeland qualified for the Accounting III position, recently vacated by Kathy Lee. **Stacey Patane** moved up a notch on the organizational chart, when she qualified to replace **Donna Spelts**. We are very proud of the entire group and appreciative of their hard work and dedication.

Alyce Cloutier and **Joy Elwood** have also worked very hard on a number of projects. If you ever want anything done, they are the ones to ask for help.



For the southern parks, the busy season is already upon them and for everyone else, it's not very far off. Allen and I hope to visit as many parks as possible during the spring and summer months. We would like to experience what is going on in your parks when they are busy rather than on weekdays, or during the off season. We will provide ample notice and would prefer to be assigned specific tasks so that we don't add to your workload.



Thanks for all of your support during the last several months. I have gained a great deal of admiration for all of you, which has inspired me to work hard to gain support for all of our critical budget needs.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE*By Allen Newberry*

Home means NEVADA DIVISION OF STATE PARKS. I recently had the occasion of visiting a neighboring state and while there had the opportunity to discuss not only the openness of Nevada, but also the vast recreational resources available statewide. It is always a wonder to me to discuss Nevada with others that have not really had the pleasure to visit this great state where recreational opportunities abound. For the outdoor enthusiast, we really have it all.

This one gentleman was interested in visiting Yosemite National Park as he wanted a good place to hike, yet he knew nothing of the Great Basin National Park and its opportunities for recreation on the great and lesser used trails in comparison with Yosemite; let alone did he know or think of the opportunities in Nevada State Parks for hiking, camping, boating, fishing, mountain biking, pleasure driving, etc. It was a good opportunity to discuss the many wonderful places to visit statewide and to help promote and market the parks and Nevada. It has been my pleasure to visit every state park in Nevada and see the diverse opportunities for recreation statewide.

At the Park Academy we discussed many ways to market the parks and to get the word out and a few of you are doing just that. Some of you are looking and working outside the box to sponsor and promote unique activities in our remote parks both on and off-season. Several parks have paved the way for new adventures with OHV trails, specialized rentals such as trailers (unused seasonal trailers), and yurts with the list going on. State Parks will need to become more progressive as we compete for visitors with neighboring states, and for recreational dollars.



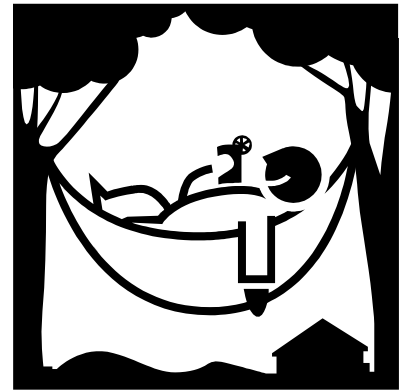
The opportunity is there for specialization, and for challenging each of us to stretch our current jobs to meet the growing demands by our recreational users. We need to seek new ways of doing things; we also need to participate in policy matters to affect change and achievement within. We also need to expand the training of all employees so we can be independent and develop our skills for future promotability. Each employee is valuable and has a role that helps make this division function. We also need to understand that as a group we work together with common goals for future development of the parks. To do this we will need to keep communications open statewide. Consistency is the big dividend in working with public and fellow staff

assuring that the visitor's park experiences are paramount for the future of the parks. Working together for the good of the agency develops loyalty and then loyalty becomes reciprocal.

Take the time to promote and enjoy the parks, to get others to enjoy the uniqueness of what I hope has not become commonplace in our own daily habitation of the parks. Please continue to work to keep parks open for the enjoyment of our visitors.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (P&D)*By J. Steve Weaver*

After some 5-1/2 years as the Park & Recreation Program Manager, **Jim DeLoney**, has retired. He and his wife bought a retirement home near Pensacola, Florida, so they can be close to their two children and grandchild. Good luck Jim!



With Jim's impending departure, we have announced Jim's position as a division promotion, and hope to fill the position soon. In the meantime, we have encountered a major snag with funding for the half-time Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants & Program Analyst II position and have since postponed recruitment indefinitely. Hence, **Randy Moore** has just assumed new responsibilities to include the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant program.

The **2004 L&WCF** grant round has been announced to the political subdivisions, with applications due May 28, 2004. Nevada will be receiving just under \$1.1 million this year, slightly less than last year. Half will go to the political subdivisions, while the other half will help fund several state park projects, namely the Sand Harbor Maintenance Shop Renovations, Sand Harbor Parking Lot Resurfacing, and the Kershaw-Ryan Campground.

P&D is making real progress on the first batch of Question 1 (Q1) projects. Acquisitions are underway at Mormon Station, Rye Patch and Berlin. With significant local residents' involvement, two alternatives for the Mormon Station master plan update are now being refined. Meanwhile, bids have been opened for the Sand Harbor Visitor Center – Phase II and the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort Visitor Center. Unfortunately, the latter will have to be re-bid, after some plan changes are made, due to excessively high bids.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (Con't)

In addition, Q1 funding has been approved to augment the Fort Churchill historic buildings rehab project that was originally funded using Commission on Tourism monies. Fort Churchill will go out to bid soon, along with the Cathedral Gorge campground renovation project.

Consultant RFP's (Request for Proposals) have been developed for Dangberg Ranch and Big Bend Q1 projects, and another one has been initiated for Valley of Fire. We've also recently hired mechanical, electrical and structural consultants for the new park office/visitor information center at Lahontan Silver Springs, a new restroom building for Mormon Station, Kershaw-Ryan's new park office, and the "Small Fossil Shelter" at Berlin-Ichthyosaur.

We recently met with Nevada Dept. of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration to see if we could possibly get our Transportation Enhancement (TEA-21) funding for Fort Churchill's Buckland Station restoration project reinstated. Right now, the prognosis is favorable.

Unfortunately, the new Echo Canyon Reservoir pedestrian bridge is still undergoing delays due to our inability to obtain a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit. We're now approaching a full year trying to obtain the permit. The permit is required to do geologic testing and construction of a temporary access road for the proposed Echo Canyon Reservoir pedestrian bridge.

The 2003 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) has been completed and published. And the trail inventory and mapping phase of the new State Trails Plan is well underway.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS

By Brad Eckert

The FY 2004 Recreational Trails Program grant cycle is well under way with the grant announcement made in early November 2003. The deadline for submitting applications for funding was February 27, 2004, at which time sixteen (16) applications were received. Over \$894,000 were requested. The amount of funds available is unknown, because U.S. Congress has not reauthorized the program. Two (2) applications were submitted by State Parks: Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park-Sand Harbor and South Fork. Needless to say, the RecTrails Program Manager has been busy reading and reviewing applications. The Ad Hoc Nevada State Recreational Trails Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet April 22, 2004 in Reno to review and rank the eligible project applications. All eligible project

sponsors will be invited to present their trail projects to the Committee. If it was up to me, all the trail projects would receive funding. Good luck to **Paul Schmidt** and **Jim Wilkinson**!

The Trail Activities in Nevada citizen survey has come to a close. Of the 1,200 Nevada citizens contacted, 499 completed and returned the questionnaire. Excluding the non-deliverables, the response rate was 47%. The data entry and analysis will be completed soon and the results will be included in the Statewide Trails Plan, scheduled for completion December 2004.

The Statewide Trails Inventory is still progressing, albeit with little progress this winter. Short, cold days are not conducive to trail mapping. I look forward to longer and warmer days. Until then, cheers.

CARSON-TAHOE REGION

DAYTON STATE PARK

By Jean Murray



Dayton State Park was developed in 1979 and finally has an entry sign! The sign is the result of an Eagle Scout project lead by **James Francis**.

The boards are hand milled from locally grown trees and the letters are three quarter inch steel individually plasma carved. The rustic old-fashioned look of the sign suits the mining roots of the park and the old west feeling of Dayton. Over time the boards may be changed, but the beautiful letters will grace entry signs for many years to come.

Spring clean-up is underway with returning Park Tech I, **Paul Long**, beginning the battle against White Top. **Donna Long**, Park Aid II at Mormon Station has been volunteering her help to clear trails while waiting for her work season to begin.

The Interpretative Program is getting a final review and is ready for the printer. Planning is in full swing for a tree planting project funded by a Forestry grant and of course budgets are being called for.



CARSON-TAHOE REGION (Con't)

Camp Hosts extraordinaire **Richard** and **Mary Rebeiro** are back--well Richard is here and Mary soon will be. The weather has been exceptional with record-breaking warm days and we are bustling around preparing the park for visitors.

MORMON STATION STATE HISTORIC PARK

By Jean Murray



The planning process for the new 1.2 acre property north of Mormon Station is well underway. A committee composed of seven community members and two park staff along with park planners **Larry Chapen** and **Oscar Sanders** are dreaming up our best visions for the park expansion project. The committee has met four times and is almost ready to present our first two options at a public meeting.

Mormon Station will open about six weeks earlier than usual this year in response to popular demand. Park Tech II, **Lynne Frost**, is back for another season and has been preparing to open by cleaning up paperwork and the park. Lynne has also volunteered quite a few hours assisting with research and a community opinion survey regarding the new plans.

Park cats *Big Head* and *Calico* are among the many that will be glad when **Lynne** and **Donna Long** are back in Genoa.

LAKE TAHOE NEVADA STATE PARK

By Dena Mutoza

As most parks are getting ready for the upcoming busy summer season, I'd like to take a minute to reflect on my first year here at Sand Harbor. I came on with State Parks June 23, 2003. Not having much knowledge with the State Park system (or with Nevada for that matter), I was thrown into a position that was still in the process of being formed, in the middle of a busy season. Not

having any structure to my new found job, I dove in head first and just tried to keep my head above water until the storm of the season passed. Well, I made it through without too much difficulty and without running far away from this place, screaming and vowing to never step foot into a Nevada State Park again. I have new friends, new colleagues, but most importantly, a new family. I've learned a lot over the past year, especially how creative the public is in coming up with reasons as to why they did not pay their fees in the off season.

I wanted to take this time to share the top ten reasons. I think we could all use a really good laugh before we become slaves to the tourist season. They are in no particular order:

1. I didn't think you were open. (Even though they just drove through the OPENED iron gates)
2. I didn't see anyone in the booth. (Even though there are about a MILLION signs saying fees collected year round)
3. I didn't know where to pay.
4. I didn't have exact change.
5. I didn't think you had to pay in the off season. (See also #2)
6. I didn't have a pen. (To fill out the self pay envelopes)
7. I didn't have any money.
8. I was going to pay on the way out. (Wow, your nose is growing as we speak!! Your name wouldn't happen to be Pinocchio would it?)
9. I was only going to stay for a few minutes. (Yeah, I believe that one)
10. I just needed to use the bathroom. (Funny, I came by 2 hours ago and you're still here).



And two that didn't make the list (only because they're not commonly heard), but are still quite funny: I didn't pay because I had a felony warrant and I stole this car!!!! And the best one from Cave Rock: I was only going to stay for 5 minutes. I'm waiting for the plane to fly over the lake and drop my dead father's remains. WOW!!! You HAVE to love working for Nevada State Parks.

FALLON/ELKO REGION**REGION III HEADQUARTERS***By Dale Conner*

We have a few introductions to make ... **Eric Johnson** was promoted to Regional Manager in the Fallon/Elko Region and brings a lot of knowledge, experience, talent, and enthusiasm to the position. Most of you have probably worked with him at some time or another. He has worked at parks all over the state – Lahontan (twice), Valley of Fire, South Fork, Echo Canyon, Spring Valley, Ft. Churchill, and Washoe Lake. Eric has been married to his wife Stacy for about two years and they have three wonderful daughters. Despite the promotion and pay raise, Eric still plans on driving old Fords to work. We are excited and grateful to have him as our leader.

Of course, the arrival of Eric means that **Terry Bray** has moved on. Terry served as the Regional Manager for seven years and has headed off into the sunset for a well-deserved retirement. Terry plans on traveling the country for a while before settling down in Wyoming. We wish him good luck and happy traveling!



The region has a new mechanic – sort of. **Pat Marker** returns to his old position after a 13-year hiatus. He missed State Parks so much that he left his position as the Transportation Manager for the Churchill County

School District to return. Pat has also stayed busy being a dad to his two boys and continues to work as an instructor at Western Nevada Community College in Fallon. Pat has done an outstanding job servicing our vehicles and is a great asset to the region.

We would also like to welcome **Danielle Davis**, who has replaced Vickie Hanrahan as the Region III Accounting Assistant, and **Greg Willimott**, our newest Region Maintenance Specialist. Both Danielle and Greg are unavailable today for comments and pictures, but both have done a great job so far.

BERLIN-ICHTHYOSAUR STATE PARK*By Mike Dinauer*

It looks like spring. It feels like spring. It even smells like spring. The days are getting longer, calls are coming in requesting park information and tours have begun on the weekends. It must be spring.



All the creatures both animal and human have come out of winter hiding to visit the park. We have seen some nice herds of mule deer, as well as the normal amount of coyotes, and even a hawk or two. Next the reptiles and rodents will be out and about.

The crack staff at Berlin-Ichthyosaur are gearing up for another busy year. Both seasonal positions have been filled and at least one long time volunteer, **LaDonna Hughes** will be returning. Ace mine hoist engine operator, **Abby Aldecoa** may not be back this year due to health problems. Abby will be missed.

NDF crews are working in the park reducing the fire threat by removing cheat grass and sagebrush in and around the town site. We don't get crews very often. Since this is a paid project they will be here for the duration.

Now it's time to do some spring-cleaning in the mine and the buildings in the town site in preparation for the start of those tours. Our best wishes to everyone for a safe and enjoyable busy season.

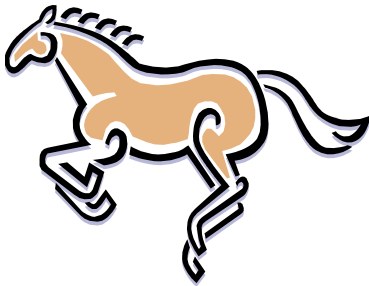
FT.CHURCHILL STATE HISTORIC PARK*By Greg Meis*

It feels like summer has arrived early this year, but we know it will get cold again before summer actually arrives. I would think it is summer, however; none of the cottonwood trees have any leaves. As the Carson River is running at almost 350 cfs we have started irrigating the Carson River Ranches.

FALLON/ELKO REGION (Con't)

Our camp hosts, **John** and **Donna Hoekel** wintered here at the park. They have been raking, raking and raking the campground. The campground is looking very good, thanks to their hard work. They are planning to stay for this summer season and will help our staff out greatly.

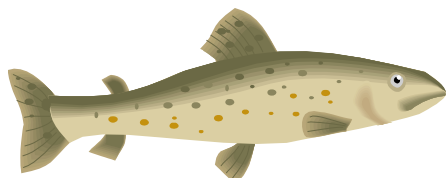
In January, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) rounded up wild horses that were located throughout the Carson River Ranches and Lahontan Recreation Area. BLM released 25 healthy horses back into the Delta area.



During December and January, two **NDF Crews** cut a fuel break west of the campground. An average of 12 tons per acre of dead and decadent debris was taken out of this area during the project. We also found that we might have the largest sagebrush in the state of Nevada by NDF records. The second phase of this project will begin later this summer; salt cedar will be cut and treated with herbicide along the river behind the campground and group area. We would like to thank NDF for all of their hard work. Their work was very sanitary, if you visit the park you will be unable to tell that this project was completed.

The adobe ruins project will go out to bid soon. All we have been doing is covering and recovering the bricks to keep them out of the rain and wind. Although we have not lost too many bricks we hope this project will start fairly soon.

Last week, 109 children from local schools in the area and the **River Wranglers** (non-profit organization) utilized the park to release rainbow trout into the Carson River. There were several other environmental stations where the kids learned about watersheds, insects, Leave No Trace and other related topics. We would like to thank **Linda Conlin**, River Wranglers, the volunteers and the local Silver Springs elementary school. This was a great event.



Fort Churchill will have three scheduled canoe trips on May 8th, 15th and June 5th. If you would like to join the park staff, please RSVP by calling 577-2345. With the current warming trends and the river data that we are receiving, the canoe trips might be changed to mid April. We will keep you posted with any changes.

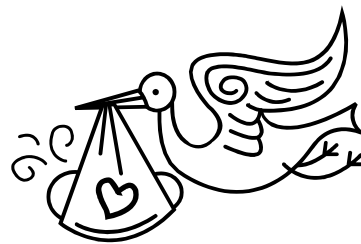


LAHONTAN STATE RECREATION AREA

By Dale Conner

It appears that spring is upon us already. Lahontan experienced a couple of very busy weekends in mid-March. With more than 50 camps on a couple of nights and jam-packed boat ramps, we were happy to see veteran seasonals, **Jim Sizemore**, **Mike Cavanaugh**, and **Jennifer Jurczak** return to help manage the Park. Lahontan has been very fortunate over the last several years to have so many outstanding seasonal workers return year after year. In addition to Jim, Mike, and Jennifer, returning seasonals that have worked at Lahontan for at least two seasons include **Fern House**, **Bob Brown**, **Oma Walliman**, **Rachel Leach**, **Monie Byers**, and **Emmitt Brown**. Other returnees include **Al Orr**, **Judy Orr**, **Denise Riddle**, **Melody Gaddis**, and **Jana Prida**. These dedicated park employees deserve a big pat on the back for their hard work and perseverance in an oft-difficult job.

Congratulations x2 are in order for **Todd Anderson**. Todd was promoted to Park Ranger III in October. More importantly, Todd and his wife Michelle are expecting a baby girl in late July/early August. Hooray!



Work continues on the Lahontan Dam interpretive trail. New stairs have been added in a couple of different places, a new trail section was built to complete the loop, and a landing was constructed at one of the two overlooks. In addition, several years' worth of tamarisk growth was cleared out of the main wetlands area.

Rob, **Todd**, and I have been busy lately working on budgets and getting ready for the busy season that already seems to be upon us. **Mike Ray** is about half-way through the P.O.S.T. Academy and is making us proud with the top test scores in the class so far! We are looking forward to his return on Memorial Day weekend so that we can get closer to full staffing at Lahontan. Hope everyone has a great summer!

FALLON/ELKO REGION (Con't)

SOUTH FORK STATE RECREATION AREA

By Jim Wilkinson

Hello from South Fork. We have survived the winter here. It was what is considered a "normal" winter in Elko County. Old timers said they hadn't seen this much snow since 1995. There was so much snow, that some old-timers were last seen in the snow and haven't been seen since. The question I need to pose is, "How do you de-winterize employees? I understand buildings and waterlines, etc. Do you turn on a valve and flush them out or do you just have to plug them back in?" It's tough to keep employees motivated anytime, but how about when they act like Grizzly bears just rousing out of hibernation. It's time to start thinking about positive ways to improve the park. The weather in the month of March has been really nice, and it's a good time to shake off the cobwebs and do some field work.



A big THANK YOU needs to go out to the **Carlin NDF Camp**. It's really nice to get some work crews out here. It's amazing the amount of work they can do in one day, and how it would take you two weeks to accomplish the same thing.

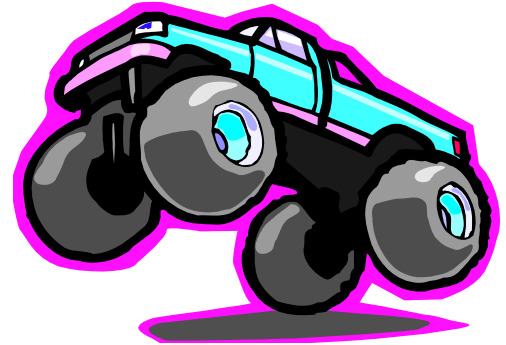
We are anxious to get going on facility improvement projects being funded by the Question 1 Bond Issue. We plan on installing several CXT units, improve our campground, install a large Group Use Area, and install a new vehicle access point to our Fisherman's Point area. All of these projects will be highly beneficial to South Fork. We hope the bond sales continue, and we can get these projects online. We hope you have a good spring and we will talk to you later.

WILD HORSE STATE RECREATION AREA

By Andrew Bass

The sounds of geese honking and water running fill the air as the joy of spring comes in full blossom. This beauty of spring makes a wonderful opportunity to remember the fun of winter. The winter was a good one and provided plenty of snow and ice for recreation. With the recreation opportunity came the people and with the people came the entertainment.

Most of the interesting memories seemed to involve those famous last words, "I've got 4-wheel drive." Many an excited fisherman was warned that the ice, although thick, had a lot of snow and slush in it. They always politely remind you that their 4-wheeler is "4-wheel drive." It seems to me that four wheels suspended in air make a vehicle move about as far as two suspended wheels. There also seems to be a shortage of ATVs with 100 yard winch cables.



One specific memory is of the nice gentleman in the minivan. With high winds and fresh snow I informed the gentleman that, "you may not want to park down there, I'm having difficulty keeping the road open." He politely reminded me that he had "4-wheel drive." I then went on plowing in an F-250 with all four tires chained up. Let's just say it is a good thing the Department of Transportation has a large snow blower.

Thank you for sharing my memories. I will leave you with one more wonderful question. As that big snow blower is clearing an eight foot wide path through three-plus feet of snow, what do you tell a visitor in a little S-10 pickup who asks, "Do you think I can get around him?????"

PANACA REGION

CATHEDRAL GORGE STATE PARK & VISITOR CENTER

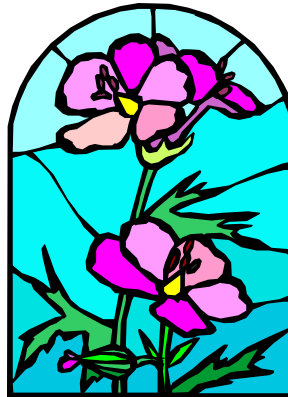
By Barbara Rohde

Cody Tingey & I were just trying to wrack our brains, thinking "what did we do this winter" and realized it has been busier than we first thought! Between the work-program crew from the **Caliente Youth Center** (funded by Nevada Business Services) and the **NDF Honor Camp** crews, a lot has been accomplished. Crews completed many projects including: a cement-floored firewood enclosure for the campground; a lodge pole rail fence along the group area walkway, and a stabilization project on the ramadas for both group use areas. They also trenched an underground electric line to the group area; and gave our wooden signs a much-needed facelift. It is amazing what these crews are capable of doing!

**PANACA REGION
(Con't)**

In November, **Barbara** attended the National Interpreters workshop in Sparks, NV (the first time it's ever been in Nevada), and came home with lots of new ideas to try in the summer programs. **Cody** attended Park Academy in January, and likewise came back charged up and ready to try some new things. If you haven't seen it yet, check out our 2004 Activity Schedule on the web site; programs won't be starting 'til April, after our seasonal Park Aid, **Nevin Birkmier**, comes back to work. We heard from our other Park Aid, **Jonathon Brunjes**, back in North Carolina – they survived the hurricane last fall. New volunteer, **Susan Austgen**, completed training at the Visitor Center and will start during March, joining our crew of four dedicated volunteers.

In February, our new T-shirts arrived from **Collegiate Graphics**, with a new design, and we have long-sleeved T's for the first time. A new artist joined our consignment sales area in January, **Korla Ward**, who does stained glass works. She has a couple sets of bookends, and a few hangings on nice stands, at very reasonable prices. We have added a few books to our inventory, and **Jennifer Finlen** from Valley of Fire was very impressed when she stopped by to visit in February!



Geranium pratense l.

Barb has been active on the **Lincoln County Trails Coalition** since its inception a year ago December, and the group is planning some activities for **National Trails Day** on June 5. These will include hikes at Beaver Dam (one which she will lead), an equestrian trail ride starting from Kershaw-Ryan, and guided ATV trail rides and a mountain bike adventure starting from Caliente. She has also been attending **Pioneer Territory Tourism** committee meetings, and helping with the re-design of the Lincoln County tourism brochure. Cody has been attending the **Diversified Interagency Resource Team (DIRT)** meetings, planning with other agencies for resource protection and recreation activities. Their big activity will be a **Public Lands Day** celebration in Lincoln County, possibly to be held at Cathedral Gorge. The local president of Pioneer Territory once mentioned that in rural areas, many committees are plagued with the "S.T.P." syndrome: the "Same Ten People" get involved in everything. Well, we are trying to spread that around a little! Stop by and visit if you're in our neck of the woods!

**KERSHAW-RYAN & BEAVER DAM STATE
PARKS**

By Phares Woods

We would like to welcome **Mike Murphy** to our parks where he will be filling the maintenance position. He comes to us by way of Berlin-Ichthyosaur, Valley of Fire and the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort state parks.

With us for his third year at Kershaw-Ryan and Beaver Dam is **Cameron Wheeler**. He is filling the Park Ranger Tech position and will be working at Beaver Dam this summer.

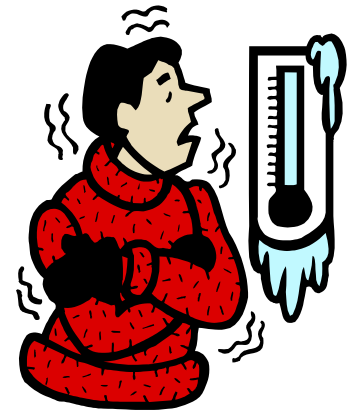
After a cold and grueling winter when we were not even able to get to Beaver Dam for a month, it is nice to see the green lawns, the fruit trees in bloom and leafing out and kids playing in the pool. The first wedding of the year is just a month away, school groups are making reservations for their end-of-year parties and families are scheduling their reunions. The busy season is upon us.

There is not much to report at the moment, but we have an interesting year ahead in both parks. We'll have much more to say later.

SPRING VALLEY STATE PARK

By Pete Gill

With what appeared to be a respite from several years of mild, dry, and serve-drought winter conditions, winter 2004 at times seemed like those of long ago: Eagle Valley reservoir iced over with double-digit ice thickness, periods of daily highs in mid-20s with sub-zero temperatures in the teens, and snow that stayed on the ground for weeks. At one point in January, we had snowfall on 5 straight days.



Despite the miserable conditions, we had **NDF crews** in the park to work on a fire fuels reduction/dead tree removal project. We had enough visitors and brief periods of mild weather to keep our campground and facilities in full-service mode. With days few until the beginning of spring, and daytime temperatures already reaching the 70's, the snow mostly gone, and the reservoir mostly thawed, we are looking ahead with anticipation once again to our age-old rite "the busy season!"

PANACA REGION (Con't)

WARD CHARCOAL OVENS STATE HISTORIC PARK

By Domenic Bravo

I hope this PEN finds all of park staff and their families well. There has not been too much going on here at Ward. We have finished up the cutting portion and some of the chipping for the fire mitigation grant. Now that the snow is melting it is the time to clean-up and seed some of the areas. Some plans for this summer, are upgrades on the main road, an extended deck on the yurt, and an increase in interpretive programming. Take care and tune in to next PEN for exciting behind the scenes from Lord of the Rings *the six ovens*. (Just kidding.)

LAS VEGAS REGION

SPRING MOUNTAIN RANCH STATE PARK

By Karen Rennick



Aurevior...

Alas, the time has come to say goodbye. It seems odd to be writing this, though I knew the day would come. I am retiring on May 21 after 25 years of service. I've known some of you since the beginning, in 1979. There are a bunch of us old fossils soon to be put out to pasture. We have had some amazing ups and downs together (you know who you are). Adventures at Clear Creek, Washoe Lake hot tub parties...seems like yesterday.

I've worked at several locations, including District Interpreter in Carson City, and Ranger I at Valley of Fire, Tule Springs (aka Floyd Lamb) and Spring Mountain Ranch. While they all have special memories for one reason or another, my heart will always belong to the Ranch.

I have been at the Ranch for over 15 years. It has been a pleasure to work at such a beautiful, culturally rich park. I can't think of anyone who has ever worked here that did not love this park. It gets in your blood. I guess it will stay there because a Docent talked me into joining the Docents. In the fall I will don white shirt and khakis and come out once a month for a shift. It will be great to have the opportunity to stay in touch with such a great group of people.

Yes, despite the occasional grumbling and 'gripe sessions' from time to time, it has been a great ride. Thank you all so much for your friendship and support over the years. I hope you have a great career and retire fulfilled (and become a Docent). One chapter closes, another one opens...on to new adventures...

Happy Trails! Love, Karen ☺

VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK

By Jennifer Finlen

I decided to do something a little different this time then my usual paragraph. Change is good, right?! So, now I'm introducing, "*Finlen's Fifteen Favorites*":

Questions That Are Asked To Employees By Visitors

1. Do you paint the bushes blue? (simple question, but requires a complex answer about illusion and reflective index) or (no, we hire a specialized crew to do it)
2. Where is the gift shop? (they are asking this while standing at the sales counter)
3. Do you paint the rocks? (why not, red is an inexpensive color)
4. Why am I here? (that's a philosophical question)
5. Have you ever shot anyone? (not yet)
6. What's the small brown bird flying around outside? (Oh, you mean the LGB, the little gray bird)
7. Now where do I go? (they assume you already know where they have been, and you suppress the desire to say, "head south, then turn right followed by a right, then another right again, and you will be there")
8. Do people actually live in the park? (as opposed to what alternative)
9. While at the Visitor's Center, I'm not coming thru the park, do I still have to pay the fee? (the visitor's center is 5 miles into the park)
10. How did I get here? (good question, you start hoping someone else is driving)
11. Do you make the holes in the rocks? (yes, we have a hole making machine out back)



LAS VEGAS REGION (Con't)

12. Can I rent the Cabins? (yes, but you have to return them)
13. Where is the fire at? (turned off due to high fuel costs)
14. Do you need a gun to operate a cash register? (payment incentive)
15. And my personal favorite, Don't ya get lonely all the way out here?? (yes, it's just me and several hundred visitors each day)

I am curious to know if other people get the same questions or if it's just us out at the Valley of Fire. There is one more question that is common to the region and not just this park. That would be "Why is it so hot?" (I wonder...it is the middle of the summer, in the middle of the desert, in the middle of the day!)

Thanks to Jim Hammons for supplying his twisted sense of humor with the answers to these questions. Until next time...

AWARDS

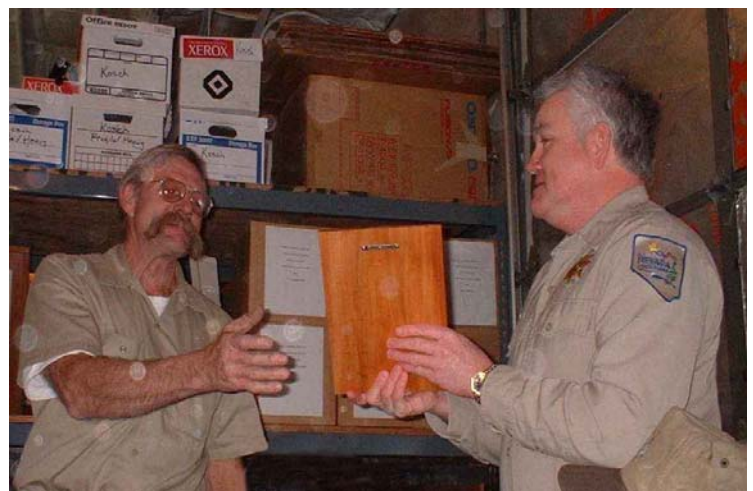
By Alyce Cloutier



Jim Deloney, Park & Recreation Program Manager received his Certificate of Appreciation for 5 years of service with State Parks, from Dave Morrow, Administrator.



Allen Newberry, Chief of Operations & Maintenance, presented **Geoff Hall**, Facility Supervisor, Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, his 15-year service plaque.



Bob Milne, Maintenance Repair Specialist, Carson/Tahoe Region, received his 15-year service plaque from Allen Newberry, Chief of Operations & Maintenance.

I can't imagine a person becoming a
success who doesn't give this game
of life everything he's got.
— Walter Cronkite

**STATE PARK'S VISITOR SURVEY REPORT
CARD**

By Joy Elwood

I have gathered some data based on the final input of visitor surveys for 2003 and compared some of this data with results from 2002. Here is what has been surmised so far. Out of 16, 739 surveys distributed in 2003, we received 1,201 surveys, which is a 1.1% decrease over the year 2002.

So, how did the public say we did last year? We got an **A+**, because we increased the number of excellent rankings from last year's report. Here are the results:

The following is the overall rating for all state parks:

		<u>Increase or Decrease</u> <u>Over 2002</u>
Excellent	73.9%	5.4% Increase
Good	21.2%	4.8% Decrease
Average	3.7%	.2% Decrease
Poor	.7%	.4% Decrease
Unacceptable	.6%	.1% Increase

The Regional Scores

The following is the ranking of the regions based on the highest amount of Excellence:

Region 5
Region 2
Region 6
Region 3

The following is the ranking of the regions based on the lowest amount of below average ratings:

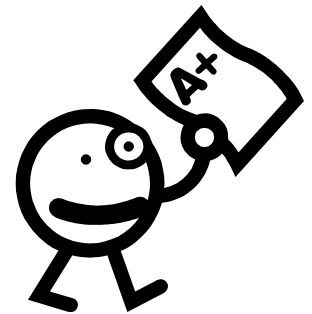
Region 5
Region 6
Region 2
Region 3

The Park's Scores

These results are based on a minimum return of 30 surveys for the year. 30 samples are generally recognized as the minimum number required to provide statistical valid survey results. So, several parks didn't make the list.

The following is the ranking of the parks based on the highest amount of Excellence:

Cathedral Gorge
Mormon Station
Berlin-Ichthyosaur
Valley of Fire
Kershaw Ryan
Cave Lake
Spring Valley
Lake Tahoe
Ft. Churchill
Beaver Dam
Floyd Lamb
Lahontan
South Fork



The following is the ranking of the parks based on the lowest amount of below average ratings:

Beaver Dam
Berlin-Ichthyosaur
Mormon Station
Cathedral Gorge
Valley of Fire
Kershaw Ryan
Ft. Churchill
South Fork
Cave Lake
Lahontan
Spring Valley
Lake Tahoe
Floyd Lamb



Popular Activities

The following are the top 10 activities enjoyed at our parks, despite decreases from 2002:

		<u>Increase or Decrease</u> <u>Over 2002</u>
Relaxing Outdoors	76.7%	3% Increase
Hiking/Walking	58.3%	10.1% Increase
Camping	43.5%	7.2% Decrease
Picnicking	36.4%	1.6% Decrease
Photography	35.6%	17.2% Increase
Pleasure Driving	31.5%	6.6% Decrease
Historic Sites	28.2%	.1% Decrease
Fishing	23.5%	3.3 Increase
Nature Study	21.7%	1.5% Decrease
Swimming	18.7%	7.5 Decrease

PERSONNEL

By Anke Simpson

We had quite a few changes in the last few months. State Parks hired several new permanent employees and promoted many of our current employees.

NEW PERMANENT EMPLOYEES

Jim Bingham started as Electrician II at Floyd Lamb on 12/08/03. **Terry Ivins** began working at Cave Lake as Maintenance Repair Specialist II on 12/22/03. Region III Headquarters hired three new employees. **Danielle Davis**, Accounting Assistant III took Vickie Hanarahan's old position on 11/17/03, **Pat Marker** started on 01/20/04 as Equipment Mechanic II and **Gregg Willimott**, Maintenance Repair Worker I, started on 02/02/04.

PROMOTIONS

Todd Anderson was promoted from Park Ranger II to Park Ranger III at Lahontan-Silver Springs on 10/29/03. **Jennifer Finlen** also promoted from Park Ranger II to Park Ranger III at Valley of Fire on 11/24/03. **Mike Murphy** promoted from a seasonal Park Ranger Technician I position at Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort to a permanent Maintenance Repair Worker II position at Kershaw Ryan.

PROMOTIONS (Con't)

Rick Keller was promoted from Park Ranger III to Park Supervisor III at Lake Tahoe on 03/01/04. **Eric Johnson** promoted from his Park Supervisor II position at Washoe Lake to the Regional Manager II position at the Fallon Region on 03/04/04, after Terry Bray retired. **Kim Copeland**, Accounting Assistant III at Division was promoted to Accounting Technician I on 03/15/04.

GOOD BYES

Ron Cothran, Maintenance Repair Specialist II at Fallon Region Headquarters transferred to the Department of Wildlife on 01/11/03. **Donna Spelts**, Accounting Assistant II at the Division Office accepted a promotion to Accounting Assistant III at the Division of Child and Family Services on 02/16/04. **Terry Bray** retired from his position as Regional Manager II at Fallon Region on 03/03/04 after spending 29 years with Nevada State Parks. Good luck to all of them in their new adventures.



Return Service Requested

#4162

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Nevada Division of State Parks
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Carson City, NV 89703-5202